

IP380-15 Intersectionality and Power

24/25

Department

Liberal Arts

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Dannelle Gutarra Cordero

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

During the summer of 2020, Black Lives Matter protests were held around the globe. Following an intersectional praxis, the Black Lives Matter Movement denounced the long-lived perpetuation of structural racism and the postracial rhetoric claiming with disdain that present-day racism is more “subtle.” Inspired by Kimberlé Crenshaw’s definition of intersectionality, Black activists publicly stressed how Black trans people with disabilities are systematically disregarded and targeted within social justice movements. Some politicians, media and corporations publicly proclaimed that “silence was not an option anymore” and made public statements about their commitment to “do better”. Yet, it soon became obvious that institutions simply continued upholding their status quo, refusing to speak of reparations or to follow an intersectional framework.

What makes structural violence so pervasive and enduring? What are the key ideas of race, gender, sexuality and disability affecting the division of power and wealth today? How have these ideas infiltrated media representation, medical disparities, educational systems, beauty standards, environmental policy, public memory and carceral landscapes? How can liberal arts affirm the full personhood of intersectional identities?

This module examines the recent history of ideas of intersectional oppression, paying close attention to how long-standing hateful discourses influence power and institutions today. Our conversations will consistently study impactful concepts and scholarship about the distribution of power and the intersections of race, gender, sexuality and disability, engaging with major

interdisciplinary debates across the humanities, natural sciences and social sciences. We will trace the historical reverberations of institutional violence in media representation, educational systems, wealth gaps, exploitative tourism, policy making, legal frameworks and global health disparities. We will lastly reflect about the links between intersectionality and interdisciplinarity, exploring the significance of reparations and radical imagination in liberal arts.

Module aims

This module will be a reparative academic space spotlighting underrepresented voices and stories, contributing to the existing curriculum of the Department of Liberal Arts. Following problem-based learning and student-led teaching, the main objective will be to explore how discourses of race, gender, sexuality and disability influence power and institutions today. The intersectional, anti-racist approach of this module will encourage students to grow as critical thinkers and interdisciplinary scholars as they question the foundations and legacies of structural and institutional oppression. This will be an optional module of the Department of Liberal Arts and will also be open to any interested students across the university.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Following a decolonising framework, the module will change based on current events and student input. A tentative syllabus might include the following topics:

- *Tourism, Appropriation and Exploitation
- *Scientific Racism and Global Health Then and Now
- *Carcerality, Social Welfare and Black Trans Activism
- *Race, Sex, Performance and Orientalism in Media
- *Environmental Racism, Climate Change and Indigenous Advocacy
- *Eugenics, Intelligence and Education Policy
- *The Politics of Skin Tone, Childhood and Beauty
- *Public Memory, Representation and the Literary Canon
- *The Black Lives Matter Movement and the COVID-19 Pandemic

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Identify key historical and current discourses about the intersections of race, gender, sexuality and disability.
- Recognise contemporary legacies of the global history of intersectional oppression.
- Apply intersectional theory to the critical analysis of primary sources and case studies related to intersections of race, gender, sexuality and disability.
- Consider ethical implications of intersectional research approaches.
- Engage in meaningful reflection on module themes, such as intersectionality, reparative justice, institutional oppression and interdisciplinarity.

- Conduct interdisciplinary research through an intersectional lens.

Indicative reading list

Following a decolonising framework, the reading list will change based on current events and student input. A tentative reading list might include the following:

Alsultany, Evelyn. *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation after 9/11*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

Benjamin, Ruha. *Race after Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*. Cambridge: Polity, 2019.

Cooper Owens, Deidre. *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2017.

Davis, Angela Y. *Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories, 2011.

Erigha, Maryann. *The Hollywood Jim Crow: The Racial Politics of the Movie Industry*. New York: New York University Press, 2019.

Foucault, Michel. "17 March 1976." In *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, edited by Mauro Bertani & Alessandro Fontana. New York: Picador, 2003.

Hernández, Tanya Katerí. *Racial Subordination in Latin America: The Role of the State, Customary Law, and the New Civil Rights Response*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

hooks, bell. *Reel to Real: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

hooks, bell. *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Hua, Wen. *Buying Beauty: Cosmetic Surgery in China*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013.

Jarrín, Álvaro. *The Biopolitics of Beauty: Cosmetic Citizenship and Affective Capital in Brazil*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2017.

Joseph, Ralina L. *Transcending Blackness: From the New Millennium Mulatta to the Exceptional Multiracial*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

Jung, Sun. *Korean Masculinities and Transcultural Consumption*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011.

Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. New York: Random House, 2007.

Mbembe, Achille. *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Morning, Ann Juanita. *The Nature of Race: How Scientists Think and Teach about Human Difference*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

Muhammad, Khalil Gibran. *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.

Painter, Nell Irvin. *The History of White People*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2010.

Peña Ovalle, Priscilla. *Dance and the Hollywood Latina: Race, Sex, and Stardom*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010.

Roberts, Dorothy. *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Recreate Race in the Twentieth Century*. New York: The New Press, 2011.

Roberts, Dorothy. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. New York: Random House, 2016.

Strings, Sabrina. *Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia*. New York: New York University Press, 2019.

Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

Students will be expected to submit a final research project, contributing an innovative argument and examining primary, secondary and theoretical literature.

Interdisciplinary

Like all modules from the Department of Liberal Arts, this module is interdisciplinary, engaging with the humanities, the sciences and the social sciences. This module in specific applies intersectional interdisciplinary lenses, such as Black Studies and Gender and Sexuality Studies.

International

This module has a global scope, spotlighting underrepresented communities and studying international and transnational intersections of race, gender, sexuality and disability.

Subject specific skills

Students will gain knowledge about key theoretical approaches to intersectionality and learn from the voices and stories of historically underrepresented and silenced communities, establishing connections with core modules offered in the Department of Liberal Arts.

Transferable skills

All skills prioritised in the Department of Liberal Arts would be considered transferable skills due to its collaborative problem-based/student-led learning methodologies and its commitment to student employability and engaged citizenship and leadership. The following are some of the skills

students would further develop in this module:

Critical and independent thinking – developed through: class discussions on intersectional oppression; Written communication – developed through: project preparation and final reflection; Oral communication – developed through: class discussions on intersectional oppression; Research and evaluation – developed through: submission of research project.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	10 sessions of 2 hours (13%)
Private study	35 hours (23%)
Assessment	95 hours (63%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

This module will require 3.5 weekly hours of private study for close reading of assigned readings and further research.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Close Reading Exercise	35%	30 hours	Yes (extension)
Students will be expected to submit a close reading exercise based on their critical analysis of primary sources.			
Final Research Project	50%	55 hours	Yes (extension)
Students will be expected to submit a final research project, contributing an original argument. This final research project should critically engage with primary, secondary and theoretical			

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
sources.			
Reparative Reflection	15%	10 hours	Yes (extension)
Students will be expected to submit a reflective piece on how the module has empowered them to consider intersectional oppression and reparative justice through critical lenses, along with the practical applications of what they have learned for their academic and professional trajectories. This reflection should be 500 words or 5 minutes of audiovisual content.			

Feedback on assessment

Feedback to written assignments will be provided via Tabula.

Availability

Courses

This module is Unusual option for:

- Year 3 of UVCA-LA99 Undergraduate Liberal Arts
- Year 4 of UVCA-LA98 Undergraduate Liberal Arts with Intercalated Year